

From: [Sedgwick, Ellery](#)
To: [DHCD-Mandate Relief](#);
Subject: Suggestions from Prince Edward County
Date: Sunday, November 13, 2011 12:20:58 PM

I am forwarding the following summary of comments made by the Board and Administration of Prince Edward County Schools on the subject of mandate reduction:

Ellery Sedgwick
PECPS Board Member

- Testing requirements are increasing, and this places an enormous burden on teachers, principals, division-level staff, technology/equipment, and budgets. Next year we are required to conduct all SOL testing online, placing additional burdens on these same people and resources. In PECPS, we are implementing this in 2011-12, and this is one of the reasons that we have spent such large sums on upgrading our technology infrastructure.
- The new requirements for Capstone Classes, Economics/Financial Literacy, Work Force Readiness, and College-Ready achievement are unfunded mandates.
- The “borrowing” of funds from VRS by the Governor and Legislature has now resulted in placing the burden on local budgets to “pay back” in the form of higher VRS employer contribution rates. We have been informed that our VRS employer share will likely increase 10-12% for the coming budget year (additional funds needed of approximately \$175,000, assuming no salary increase). This, in combination with the change in our Composite Index announced yesterday by DOE will result in a sharp increase in local funds needed to maintain level funding (additional funds needed of approximately \$360,000).
- It may not be feasible to easily identify specific items or reports to cut. At the division level, we are frequently not aware of the state and Federal implications of reporting requirements. Most of these requirements are not discreet, stand-alone items. They are connected on many different levels, thus making an easy target in arguments by

the opposing forces against the VSBA position to cut any given item.

I add an observation of my own: As the parent of a Special Education child, I felt that the required presence of so many teachers, councellors, and administrators at IEP meetings and much of the paperwork they had to deal with was an immense waste of valuable professional time and was counterproductive. The process could be significantly simplified and still fulfill the purpose.